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Thursday, March 16, 2017 www.metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

IN DEFENSE OF A TITLE

The Wildcats start their journey to repeat tonight. 25-26

Penn Medicine
DERMATOLOGY

See NCAA brackets. 16-17

The newest maternity trend. 20-21

FAKE NEWS 101

Class teaches kids how to separate fact from fiction. 4

KAIT MOORE

LAWMAKERS PRESSURE COMEY ON TRUMP CLAIM

1 A key Republican lawmaker said he did not believe the Obama administration wiretapped Trump Tower during the 2016 election campaign, adding to pressure on FBI Director James Comey to provide evidence supporting or debunking Republican President Donald Trump's claim. "We don't have any evidence that that took place," House of Representatives Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes

told a news conference. "I don't think there was an actual tap of Trump Tower." Trump made the claim on Twitter on March 4 without providing evidence. Nunes' congressional committee is one of at least four that have added the startling accusation to investigations of possible Russian meddling in the election campaign. REUTERS

FEDERAL RESERVE RAISES RATES AS JOB GAINS

2 The U.S. Federal Reserve raised interest rates on Wednesday for the second time in three months, a move spurred by steady economic growth, strong job gains and confidence that inflation is rising to the central bank's target. The decision to lift the target overnight interest rate by 25 basis points to a range of 0.75 percent to 1.00 percent marked one of the Fed's most convincing steps yet in the effort to return monetary policy to a more normal footing. However, the Fed's policy-setting committee did not flag any plan to accelerate the pace of monetary tightening. Although inflation is "close" to the Fed's 2 percent target, it noted that goal was "symmetric," indicating a possible willingness to allow prices to rise at a slightly faster pace. REUTERS

RYAN FORESEES NO MAJOR CHANGES IN HEALTH PLAN

3 House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan said the major elements of the Republican health care overhaul plan backed by President Trump will remain intact despite conservative opposition to a bill whose prospects remain up in the air. The White House and Ryan struggled to shore up support among Republican lawmakers for the legislation ahead of a key hurdle in the House Budget

Committee on Thursday. Vice President Mike Pence was set to met with conservative House lawmakers and then the entire Republican House membership. Ryan, who unveiled the legislation last week and is its main champion in Congress, said he was open to making "improvements and refinements." REUTERS

TRAINING DAY

5 An F-35 fighter jet take-offs for a training mission at Hill Air Force Base on Wednesday in Ogden, Utah. Hill is the first Air Force base to get combat ready F-35's. They currently have 17 that might be deployed in the fight against terrorism and ISIS in the near future. GETTY IMAGES

FLA. AIRPORT SHOOTER MENTALLY FIT FOR TRIAL

4 An Iraq war veteran accused of killing five people in a shooting at a Florida airport this year appears mentally fit to stand trial despite psychiatric health issues, a federal judge said. U.S. District Judge Beth Bloom said she would not order a mental competency evaluation for Esteban Santiago after his lawyers said he was taking prescribed anti-psychotic medication and participating in his defense. "He has been increasingly engaged and present during each of his sessions with his lawyers," said Bloom, who sits in the Southern District of Florida in Miami. Santiago, 26, was diagnosed with schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder after his arrest, according to court documents. Authorities say he opened fire in the baggage claim area of the Fort Lauderdale airport on Jan.

WELCOME TO METRO.US!

ALEXIS SACHDEV, WEB PRODUCER Another day, another "fake news" rant from the commander-in-tweet. This time, his target was Rachel Maddow and an investigative journalist who obtained Donald Trump's 2005 tax returns. ("A reporter, who nobody ever heard of," by Trump's standards.) But the White House verified the numbers: Trump paid nearly $38 million in taxes that year. So who's lying? The president's de facto landlord? Or that no-name journalist, who's known Trump for two decades? Read more about this headscratcher at **metro.us/news**

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metro.us/quiz

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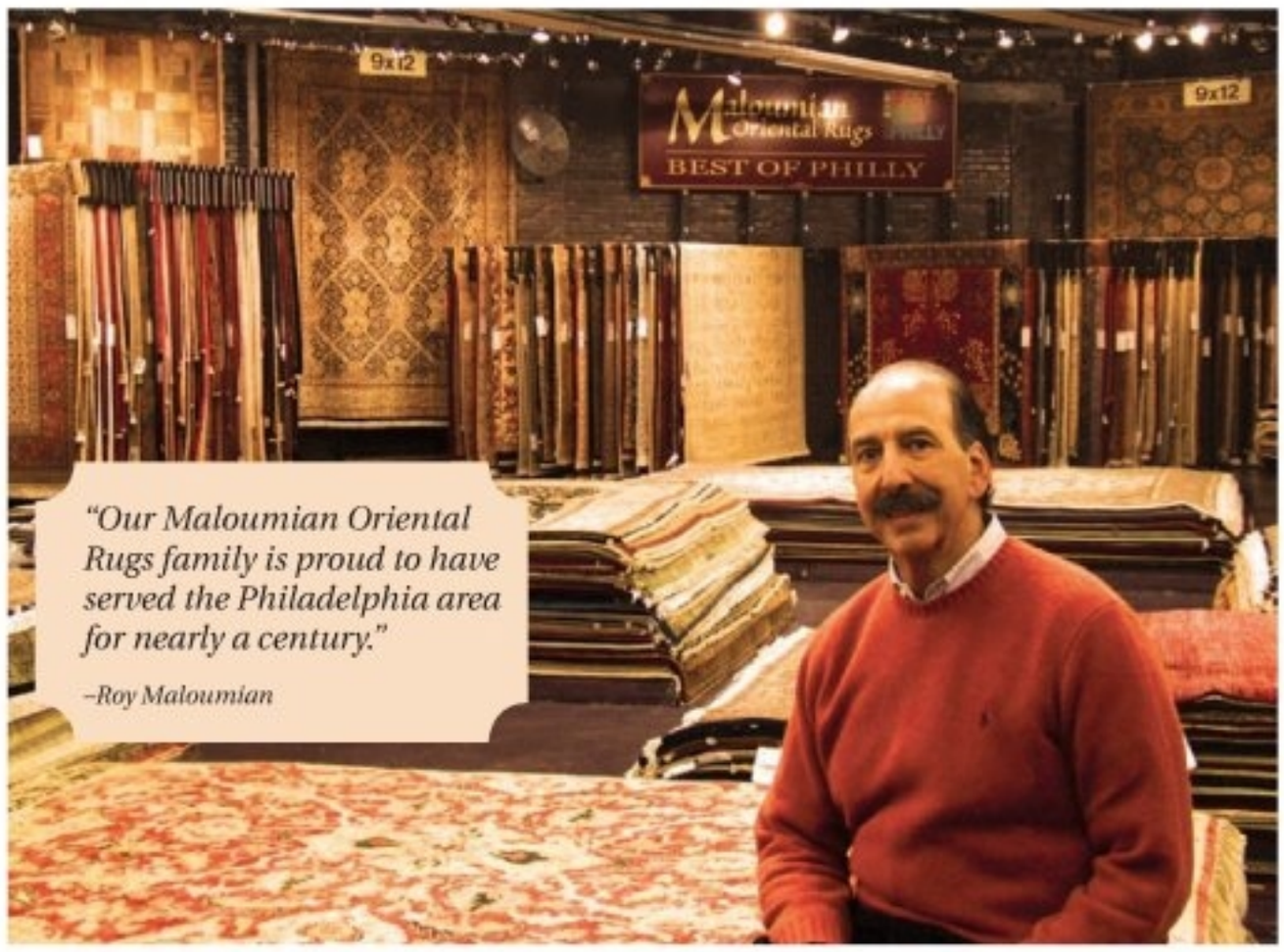
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West Philly class teaches students to recognize and reject fake news

A class taught by Mighty Writers aims to separate fact from fiction.

ALEXIS SACHDEV
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Christina Rissell and James Cook, 13

Cook, right, and a classmate collaborate on an assignment. ALL IMAGES COURTESY KAIT MOORE

Facing students with noses buried in smartphone video games and eyes glued to YouTube videos, Christina Rissell is always trying to redirect their focus to the day's lesson. Fortunately, today's topic is an attention-grabber: fake news.

Her group of young teens at Mighty Writers West is tech-savvy, but they struggle in separating fact from fiction, especially in the news media — just like adults.

That's why the nonprofit after-school program offers Fake News Finders, a weekly class that teaches the 10- to 14-year-olds the difference between real news, propaganda, entertainment, advertising and publicity — and the dangers of confusing them.

"I realized that they had no idea about where to get sources, and why it's important," said Rissell, who has been working with Mighty Writers since 2015.

Rissell said her students, who are gearing up to write research papers both in school and at the after-school program in the coming years, are accustomed to citing Wikipedia and YouTube, which can be unreliable sources.

Students are learning that buying into fake news has consequences.

"Say if a person heard that there's gonna be a riot right here and they wanted to participate in it, but everything is normal," said James Cook, a 13-year-old student at Mastery Charter Schools. "So then, they'll probably get arrested or something."

> *"I realized that they had no idea about where to get sources, and why it's important."*
> Christina Rissell

That example came up in curriculum. Tweets appeared after Freddie Gray's death in Baltimore that purported to show widespread rioting and looting. But the person who posted the tweet used photos from prior years and taken in foreign countries. While groups of residents were working to protect their community, these tweets prompted calls to law enforcement.

Fake news hit a fever pitch during the 2016 election season. Many pundits agreed that the spread of misinformation changed the outcome of the presidential race.

Although Rissell's curriculum focuses on current events, it's decidedly nonpolitical. But her students, who often watch the nightly news with their parents, are paying attention to the world around them.

Nasir Newman, 12, said he sees a lot of fake news spread right now and hears plenty of talk about it from adults.

"If the president is spreading fake news, he might start a war," said Newman, a student at the Greene Street Friends School. "That would be very bad, because when he lies, we die."

EXAMPLES OF FAKE NEWS SITES

National Report
Now8News
News Examiner
World News Daily Report
Huzlers
Associated Media Coverage
The Reporterz
Empire News
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Empire Herald

Trump and Clinton dominate fake news stories

In the three months leading up to Election Day last year, fake news headlines earned more than eight million engagement hits on Facebook, outperforming real news from long-established news outlets.

To put that in perspective, the the most successful fake or false headline earned 960,000 engagements on Facebook, which includes likes, shares and clicks. The top-performing story that was real, about President Donald Trump's history of corruption from the Washington Post, earned shy of 850,000 during the same period.

Here are the 10 most popular fake news headlines from August to November:

1. Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump for President, Releases Statement (960,000)
2. WikiLeaks CONFIRMS Hillary Sold Weapons to ISIS...Then Drops Another BOMBSHELL! Breaking News (789,000)
3. IT'S OVER: Hillary's ISIS Email Just Leaked & It's Worse Than Anyone Could Have Imagined (754,000)
4. Just Read the Law: Hillary is Disqualified from Holding Any Federal Office (701,000)
5. FBI Agent Suspected in Hillary Email Leaks Found Dead in Apparent Murder-Suicide (567,000)
6. FBI Director Received Millions from Clinton Foundation, His Brother's Law Firm Does Clinton's Taxes (538,000)
7. ISIS Leader Calls for American Muslim Voters to Support Hillary Clinton (522,000)
8. Hillary Clinton In 2013: "I Would Like to See People Like Donald Trump Run for Office; They're Honest and Can't Be Bought" (481,000)
9. BREAKING: Fraudulent Clinton Votes Discovered by the "Tens of Thousands" (462,000)
10. President Obama Confirms He Will Refuse To Leave Office if Trump Is Elected (379,000)

Going to the dentist just got easier

WRITTEN BY
Amy Smith

If going to the dentist freaks you out, you're not alone. Experts say that between 9 and 20 percent of Americans put off dental visits due to anxiety and fear.

A Philadelphia-based dental school is out to change the experience.

Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry recently opened a new sedation clinic, transforming a nerve-racking experience into an easy, pain-free affair. Don't let the academic name fool you; the sleep clinic, as it's been coined, is run entirely by experienced dentists who are also full-time faculty members. What's more, board-certified dentist anesthesiologist Dr. Stanley Heleniak is leading the team as director of the facility, bringing 30 years of experience with him.

The clinic is elevating sedation dentistry, quieting fear with a calm and relaxing atmosphere.

"The Kornberg School of Dentistry has been treating patients in the greater Philadelphia area for decades, actually since 1863," says Dr. Amid Ismail, dean of the Kornberg School of Dentistry. "Each year, we perform countless dental procedures from general dentistry to the most complex cases, treating more than 27,000 patients. Now, we can provide the same quality of care to new and existing patients who want or require sedation."

The Temple Dental Sedation Center, part of the Kornberg School of Dentistry, is a comfortable space that features four operating rooms and same-day service, not to mention convenient accessibility via the Septa Broad Street subway line (Allegheny Station) with parking across the street. This means that it's never been easier to get comprehensive dental care—from routine cleanings to more complex procedures and oral surgeries. The Temple Dental Sedation Center provides care across the entire oral health spectrum.

Sedation dentistry isn't only a game changer for people suffering from dental anxiety, it's also helping patients with special needs. Developmental or behavioral issues present additional oral health challenges. Whether its prevention and maintenance or intervention for a specific dental concern, special-needs patients often have an especially tough time undergoing dental procedures. Sedation dentistry solves this problem, as Temple dentists strive to make the patient feel safe, secure and free of stress.

"The center is fully equipped to care for adults and children who have conditions that make it challenging for them to visit the dentist," says Dr. Ismail. "Perhaps they have a gag reflex or cannot cooperate because of a physical condition or have trouble understanding directions. Our dedicated and trained dentists monitor patients throughout all procedures."

The Temple Dental Sedation Center is fully staffed, currently accepting patients and delivering optimal care to both pediatric patients and adults. Temple dentists begin by creating an individualized, comprehensive treatment plan that's specific to each patient.

Being one of the largest full-range sleep clinics in the tri-state area, the new space fills a much-needed void in Philadelphia. It's ideal for nervous patients of dentists who don't provide sedation services through their practices who wish to refer their patients for this special care.

Ready to experience your next dental visit relaxed and totally at ease?

Call 215-707-9400 to schedule a consultation and get the ball rolling. You will receive top-notch patient care, cutting-edge technology, and the expertise that generations of patients from Philadelphia and the tri-state area have come to expect from Temple University's Kornberg School of Dentistry.

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Civil disobedience now comes with a $250,000 reward

The MIT Media Lab is holding a competition to reward dissenters, disrupters and rule breakers.

KRISTIN TOUSSAINT
@kristindakota
letters@metro.us

Galileo, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and Malala Yousafzai.

They were all considered "rule breakers" of their time, initially punished for their beliefs but ultimately celebrated as trail-blazing heroes.

Now, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab wants to honor the next generation of rule breakers with a $250,000 "Disobedience Award."

LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman, who is a member of the Media Lab's advisory council, donated the cash prize, which is intended to attract nominees from around the globe.

The new award will go to an individual — or group — who engages in "extraordinary disobedience for the benefit of society." Nominees for the award can be from the U.S. or anywhere in the world, but must adhere to the principles of "nonviolence, creativity, courage and taking responsibility for one's actions."

"Questioning authority and thinking for yourself is an essential component of science, of civil rights, of society," MIT Media Lab director Joi Ito said in a video announcing the competition. "At some level, disobedience is at the root of this creativity."

Zoe Neville, 5, of Boxborough, came to Boston Common to join the anti-Trump protestors, carrying a sign that reads, "We stand with love." GETTY IMAGES

The cash prize comes at a particularly relevant time in the U.S., given the current political climate. Since the election of President Donald Trump, tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets to protest his travel ban, his administration's stance on climate change, science and health care, as well as his personal statements on women.

Inspiration for the prize, conceived of last year, was more a reaction to global unrest and division than a direct answer to Trump, said Ethan Zuckerman, director of the Center for Civic Media at the MIT Media Lab.

He noted recent instances of disobedience, "from government officials defying orders from the White House, to President Trump's very campaign, which could be thought of as disobedient to existing and established political orders." But those weren't directly connected to the award, he said.

The individuals whose principled positions helped inspire the award include the Pakistani women's rights advocate Malala Yousafzai, the Russian rock group and activists Pussy Riot, and the Chinese artist and dissident, Ai Weiwei.

Located on the MIT campus, the Media Lab also welcomed nominees involved in science, culture, politics or other areas — as long as they find a "fundamental issue on which they must act." On its website, it offers up 21 people through history who serve as examples of courageous dissenters.

The lab, like the award, is a little unconventional. The research and design institution has used video, holography, electronic music, graphic design and cognition technology to study the way people think, express, and communicate ideas, and explore new scientific frontiers.

Nominations, which can be made online, opened this week, and will be accepted through May 1. The winner will be announced in July.

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The Declaration House, where Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, at Seventh and Market streets FLICKR / MICHAEL COSTANZA

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President Donald Trump GETTY IMAGES

Historic Philly sites close amid Trump's hiring freeze

More cuts are anticipated when the president's budget is unveiled this week.

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Historic sites memorializing America's founding and framers of the Constitution in Philadelphia have closed their doors in response to President Donald Trump's hiring freeze, and in anticipation of predicted budget cuts.

The Declaration House, where Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence, and Franklin's Print Shop, an exhibit recreating Benjamin Franklin's newspaper operations, have both shut their doors to tourists, Philly.com reports.

Five other attractions have closed, while other sites have limited hours or are available by appointment only, according to the report.

Bathrooms at the Independence National Historic Park have also closed, as the organization cannot hire new employees, David Fitzpatrick, head of the union that represents park employees, told the news outlet.

In his first week of office, Trump signed an executive action that implemented a hiring freeze on federal jobs to slash government payrolls, with exceptions given to the military, national security and public safety.

Trump's anticipated budget announcement Thursday is also expected to seek $54 billion in cuts to nondefense programs, including the State Department, Environmental Protection Agency and environmental programs.

In February, the National Park Service was given a break: Seasonal and short-term employees required to meet seasonal visitors were exempted under the hiring freeze, as well.

But that's not the case in Philadelphia, where Lauren Hitt, spokeswoman for Mayor Jim Kenney, told Philly.com that these cuts take educational opportunities away from students.

Canadian refugees learn to curl, and how to handle icy wipeouts

GETTY IMAGES

Arun Daniel and his mom, Suguna, first touched Canadian soil two weeks ago and, on Wednesday, they first touched ice, sliding on one knee and pushing a 40-pound granite rock across a rink.

Arun, an 11-year-old from Sri Lanka, was learning to curl alongside 45 other resettled refugees. Some had come to Canada just days before.

Arun had seen curling on TV before. It didn't seem like a real sport.

"It looked like not that fun. I was like, 'Why is it taking such a long time?' It felt like hockey is better. But when I came and really did it, I felt like, 'Oh, I shouldn't say that.'"

Even a minor wipeout, smashing his mouth to the ice when a stone hit his foot, wasn't enough to curb Daniel's enthusiasm.

The event at Toronto's Royal Canadian Curling Club was the brainchild of Anna Hill and the Together Project of which she's the director.

She founded the group last fall to fill a need: Government-assisted refugees lack social supports when they arrive in Canada, she said.

The group's previous outings include trips to taste maple syrup or to the Royal Ontario Museum. This was their first curling excursion.

"Curling is a fantastic, very Canadian winter sport, and we thought that they might be interested in learning about winter sports in Canada since we have quite a long winter here," Hill said.

People making refugee claims in Canada after crossing the border illegally have dominated the news. But these individuals, like most Canadian refugees, were hand-picked from pools screened by the United Nations.

That day in the curling club they were like movie stars, swarmed by curious journalists asking how they liked Canada in general and this quintessentially Canadian sport in particular.

One young woman, who came to Canada last month from Iraq with her sisters, nephews and niece, spent hours on the ice, sliding forward with a stone in each hand, cackling with delighted laughter at her own wipeouts.

"I'm slowly learning. The first time is fun, because you keep falling and it's funny. ... I want to learn it all. I'll be back to learn this better."

Her family's caseworker advised against using their names: Their case is still uncertain. But the young woman said the Canadians she's met have made her feel right at home.

"They're very respectful. They're like our sisters and brothers."

REUTERS

NETHERLANDS

Early returns give Dutch PM Rutte big lead over far-right Wilders

The Netherlands' center-right Prime Minister Mark Rutte roundly saw off a challenge by anti-Islam, anti-EU Geert Wilders in an election on Wednesday, early returns showed, a huge relief to other EU governments facing a wave of nationalism.

"It appears that the VVD will be the biggest party in the Netherlands for the third time in a row," a beaming Rutte told cheering supporters at a post-election party in The Hague. "Tonight we'll celebrate a little."

Rutte received congratulatory messages from European leaders and spoke with some by telephone.

"It is also an evening in which the Netherlands, after Brexit, after the American elections, said 'stop' to the wrong kind of populism," he said.

With nearly 11 percent of votes counted, Rutte's VVD Party was projected to win 32 of parliament's 150 seats, down from 41 at the last vote in 2012, but ahead of Wilders who was in third place at 20 seats, according to data provided by the ANP Dutch news agency.

The Christian Democrat CDA was second with 21 seats, the data showed.

At 81 percent, turnout was the highest in 30 years in an election that was a test of whether the Dutch wanted to end decades of liberalism and choose a nationalist, anti-immigrant path by voting for Wilders and his promise to "de-Islamicize" the Netherlands and quit the European Union.

The result was a relief to mainstream parties across Europe, particularly in France and Germany, where right-wing nationalists hope to make a big impact in elections this year, potentially posing an existential threat to the EU.

REUTERS

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Hawaii judge halts Trump's new travel ban before it can go into effect

People line up to enter the Prince Jonah Kuhio Federal Building and U.S. District Courthouse on Wednesday in Honolulu, Hawaii. President Donald Trump faces a day of legal reckoning Wednesday on the fate of his revised travel ban, with three federal courts from Maryland to Hawaii to mull the measure on the eve of its implementation. GETTY IMAGES

President Donald Trump has said the policy is critical for national security.

A U.S. federal judge in Hawaii dealt another legal blow to President Donald Trump on Wednesday, issuing an emergency halt to his revised travel ban just hours before it was set to go into effect early on Thursday.

U.S. District Judge Derrick Watson put out an emergency stop on Trump's executive order, which aimed to temporarily bar entry to the United States of most refugees as well as travelers from six Muslim-majority countries.

Watson said the state of Hawaii showed a strong likelihood of success in its claims that the order violates the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution, which prevents religious discrimination. Critics of the ban argued it was discriminatory against Muslims.

The case was one of several that were moving through U.S. courts on Wednesday brought by states' attorneys general and immigrant advocacy groups.

Trump's first travel order signed on Jan. 27, which was more sweeping than the second revised order signed on March 6, was also halted by a federal judge.

White House spokesman Sean Spicer, asked about the judge's order, did not comment. REUTERS

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White House works to sway conservatives on health care plan

Some Republicans indicated they were changing their minds after initially questioning the legislation on the grounds that it too closely resembled Obamacare.

President Donald Trump was working late on Wednesday to shore up support among skeptical fellow Republicans in Congress for a plan to dismantle much of Obamacare, as signs emerged that some conservatives skeptical of the proposal were now coming around.

Trump was expected to try to drum up support among voters for the plan at a rally in Nashville, Tennessee, amid worries triggered by a Congressional Budget Office projection that millions of Americans would lose health insurance coverage under the plan.

"We're obviously in talks with Speaker Ryan, the entire leadership team over there ... to get the best outcome based on feedback from members," White House spokesman Sean Spicer told reporters during a briefing.

Paul Ryan holds up a copy of the American Health Care Act. GETTY IMAGES

Paul Ryan, the top House of Representatives Republican, continued to champion the legislation he unveiled last week, saying on cable news that he was open to making "improvements and refinements," but adding, "The major components are staying intact."

Key conservative lawmakers said on Wednesday they were close to embracing Ryan's plan. This came after the White House signaled flexibility on a government health insurance program. Specifically, conservatives want Obamacare's expansion of the Medicaid program for the poor to end sooner than proposed by the Ryan plan, and want to introduce Medicaid work requirements for able-bodied adults without children.

Speaking on CNN, Ryan mentioned Medicaid, but gave no details of the negotiations. State governments run Medicaid with reimbursements from the federal government. Obamacare expanded it to reach more people and increased funding for it.

"Where we can improve the bill ... that's exactly what we're doing," Ryan said. "Medicaid flexibility is a good example. Giving states better chances at more flexibility."

Vice President Mike Pence earlier in the day advocated for the plan behind closed doors with the Republican Study Committee, a large group of House conservatives.

Republican Rep. Phil Roe said after the Pence meeting that the bill probably would be changed to move up by one year, to 2019, the end of the Medicaid expansion.

Obamacare enabled about 20 million previously uninsured Americans to obtain medical insurance, about half through the expansion.

The conservative group's members are "very close to signing off" on the legislation, its leader, Representative Mark Walker, told reporters.

Republicans control both Congress and the White House for the first time in a decade. But the bill, the Republicans' first major piece of legislation under Trump, has not been an easy sell to conservatives.

Senate Republicans have also voiced rising unease.

"As written, the House bill would not pass the Senate. But I believe we can fix it," Sen. Ted Cruz told reporters.

Sen. Lindsey Graham told NBC's "Today" show, "It is mortally wounded."

The conservative advocacy group FreedomWorks held a rally amid snow flurries and a frigid wind outside the Capitol where several House and Senate Republicans including Cruz and Sen. Rand Paul voiced dissatisfaction with the bill.

Afterward, Paul told reporters, "The White House has been much more open to negotiation on this" than House leaders. Trump on Monday promised "a big, fat, beautiful negotiation" over the plan.

The CBO, a nonpartisan congressional agency, forecast on Monday the plan would increase the number of Americans without health insurance by 24 million by 2026, while cutting $337 billion off federal budget deficits over the same period. REUTERS

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US indicts Russian spies, hackers over massive 2014 Yahoo hack

The indictments, announced at a news conference in Washington, represent the first time the U.S. government has criminally charged Russian officials for cyber offenses.

A staff member reveals a wanted posters for one of three Russians charged. GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. government on Wednesday unsealed charges against two Russian spies and two criminal hackers for allegedly pilfering 500 million Yahoo user accounts in 2014.

The contents of at least 30 million accounts were accessed as part of a spam campaign and at least 18 people who used other internet service providers, such as Google, were also victimized, the government charged.

The officers of the FSB, Russia's Federal Security Service, which is a successor to the KGB, were identified as Dmitry Dokuchaev and his superior, Igor Sushchin, the government said.

Both men are in Russia, it said.

Alexsey Belan, who is on the list of most-wanted cyber criminals, and Karim Baratov, who was born in Kazakhstan but has Canadian citizenship, were also named in the indictment.

The Justice Department said Baratov was arrested in Canada on Tuesday and his case is pending with Canadian authorities.

Belan was arrested in Europe in June 2013 but escaped to Russia before he could be extradited to the United States, according to the Justice Department.

"The criminal conduct at issue, carried out and otherwise facilitated by officers from an FSB unit that serves as the FBI's point of contact in Moscow on cybercrime matters, is beyond the pale," said acting Assistant Attorney General Mary McCord.

McCord said the hacking campaign was waged by the FSB to collect intelligence but that the two hackers used the collected information as an opportunity to "line their pockets."

The United States does not have an extradition treaty with Russia, but McCord said she was hopeful Russian authorities would cooperate in bringing criminals to justice. The United States often charges cyber criminals with the intent of deterring future state-sponsored activity.

The administration of former President Barack Obama brought similar charges against Chinese and Iranian hackers who have not been extradited.

The 47-count indictment includes conspiracy, computer fraud and abuse, economic espionage, theft of trade secrets, wire fraud, access device fraud and aggravated identify theft.

The charges are not related to the hacking of Democratic Party emails during the 2016 presidential election. Intelligence agencies have said they were carried out by Russia to help the campaign of Republican candidate Donald Trump. REUTERS

POLITICS

Senate confirms intelligence nominee, security adviser

The Senate voted overwhelmingly to confirm former Republican Sen. Dan Coats to be President Donald Trump's director of national intelligence and to approve Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster's transfer to become his national security adviser.

The vote was 85-12 to confirm Coats, who also served as ambassador to Germany under former President George W. Bush. Fifty-one votes were required for confirmation.

The only Republican who voted against Coats was Sen. Rand Paul, one of the Senate's leading privacy advocates, as are several of the Democrats who also voted against Coats.

Democratic Sen. Ron Wyden had said he would object to Coats' nomination because he felt the office of the director of national intelligence had not provided the committee with enough information about how many Americans' communication records had been subjected to government surveillance.

McMaster was approved in an 86-10 vote. No Republican senator voted against him.

McMaster had faced some opposition from Democratic senators who cited concerns about his past decision to allow two service members accused of assault to advance their careers while the case against them was open, in violation of Army regulations.

The Senate does not normally approve a president's national security adviser but McMaster's reappointment to his new position had to be considered by the Senate because he is an active-duty military officer.

McMaster, 54, is known for speaking his mind and challenging his superiors. REUTERS

Rise in reports of sexual assault at US Navy, Army academies

There was a rise in reports of sexual assault at U.S. Navy and Army military academies in the last year, the Department of Defense said on Wednesday.

An annual report, based on anonymous surveys, said reports of sexual assault in total across the military academies had decreased slightly in the last year, and the Air Force Academy specifically saw a decrease from 49 reports to 32.

But the Military Academy at West Point received 26 reports of sexual assault, up from 17 in the previous year, and the Naval Academy in Annapolis saw three more reports compared to last year.

West Point GETTY IMAGES

"This year's survey results underscore the unique challenges the academies face in sustaining long-term decreases in the occurrence of sexual assault," an accompanying Pentagon statement said.

U.S. Senators grilled the Navy and Marine Corps' top leaders on Tuesday about a scandal involving a Facebook group called "Marines United" for sharing explicit pictures of female members of the armed forces.

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service has opened an inquiry into the matter.

REUTERS

> *"This year's survey results underscore the unique challenges the academies face in sustaining long-term decreases in the occurrence of sexual assault."*
>
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Tesla to raise about $1.15B in stock, notes; Musk to buy shares

Tesla Inc. said on Wednesday it expects to raise about $1.15 billion from a stock and senior notes offering, an infusion of needed capital as the electric car maker enters pre-production of its upcoming Model 3 electric sedan.

A capital raise by Tesla has been anticipated since late last year, gaining steam last month after Chief Executive Elon Musk said the company could be "close to the edge" on cash needs.

Some Wall Street analysts had predicted that Tesla would seek to raise as much as $2.5 billion in capital.

Tesla has repeatedly turned to Wall Street for fresh capital throughout its history. It has had negative cash flow since 2014 and has posted a quarterly profit only twice since going public.

Tesla Inc. GETTY IMAGES

Tesla had $3.39 billion in cash and cash equivalents at the end of 2016, but most comes from a May stock offering, cash from its SolarCity acquisition and nearly $1 billion in draws on its credit facilities.

Tesla's warning that it would spend $2 billion-$2.5 billion in the first half of 2017 in capital expenditures left little cushion at a critical time ahead of its Model 3 production, which the company says will begin in July.

The company's shares, which are down 9 percent since a 52-week year high in February, rose 2.1 percent to $261.11 in after-hours trade.

U.S. charges Russian spies, hackers in massive Yahoo hack

Uber has until April 7 to respond to Waymo preliminary injunction bid: judge

Tesla said it would offer $250 million of common stock and $750 million of convertible senior notes due in 2022 in concurrent underwritten registered public offerings.

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13 E. Tenn. St. (27-7)
6 SMU (30-4)
11 Providence/Southern California
3 Baylor (25-7)
14 N. Mexico St. (28-5)
7 South Carolina (22-10)
10 Marquette (19-12)
2 Duke (27-8)
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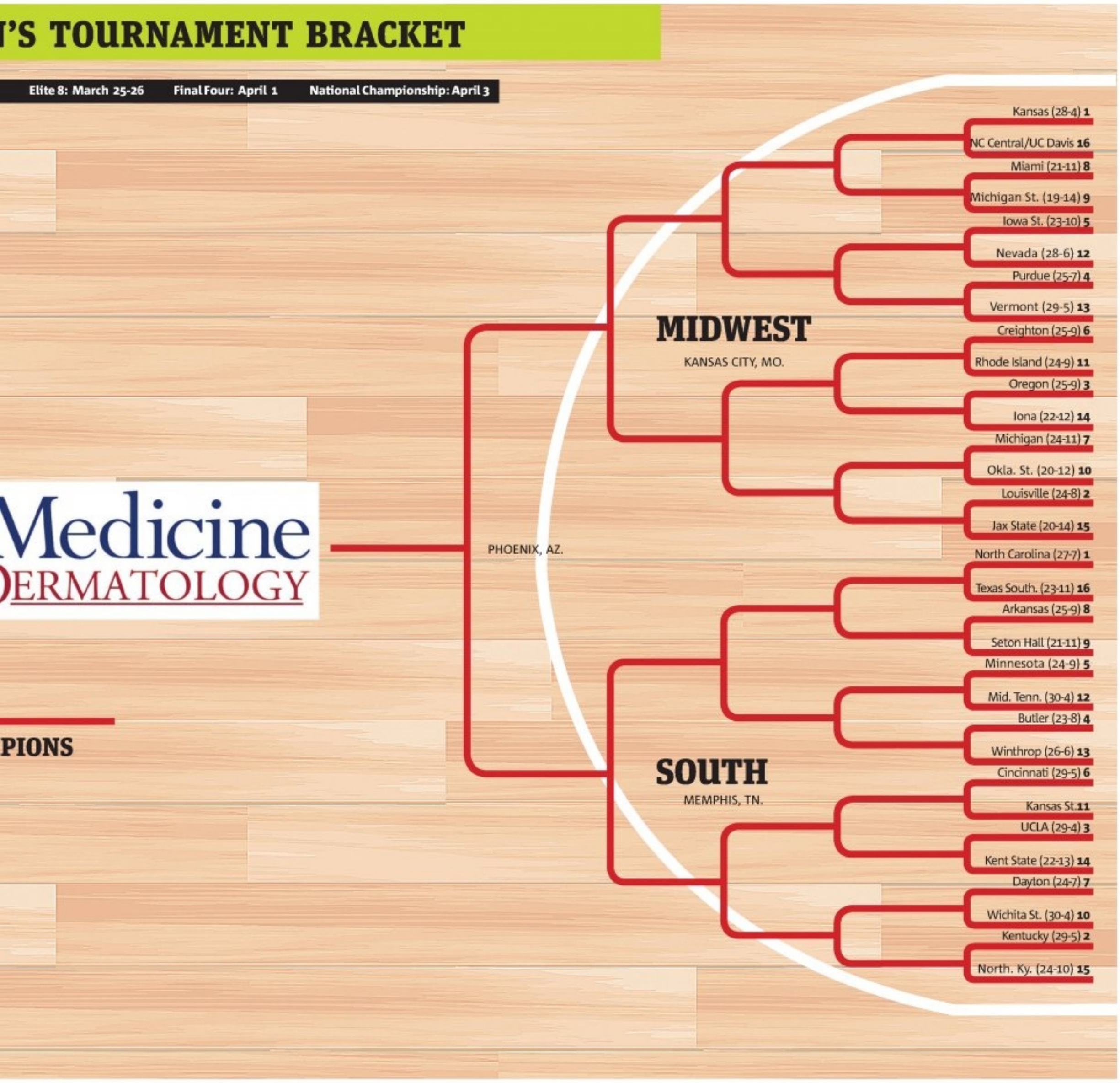

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Jesse James inspires with stupid words

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Jesse James — who supposedly is a business man and television personality — is talking about his long-ago marriage to Sandra Bullock with The Daily Mail. (The couple divorced in 2012, after some of James' mistresses came out about being his side pieces.) And trust me, he doesn't come off sounding like a good dude at all. Here's a quick lil' guide to all the stupid things he word-vomited.

1. *"Yeah, I did cheat on my wife. I stood up … and apologized."* OK, sure. I'll give him this one.

2. *"Both women and men cheat … it's a part of life."* I mean, yes, that's true. But it doesn't necessarily have to be. Unless you choose for it to be. Which is something you did, my dude.

3. *"The easy insult is like, 'Oh, well you cheated on Sandra Bullock.' That's the world's easiest comeback."* Is it an insult if it's just a fact of life, though? Methinks no.

4. *"It's like people love to see you fall. And the farther you get, the higher you get the more they love it."* I love it when a grown man blames everyone else for his problems. Responsibility — who needs it?!

So just in case that was too long and you didn't read: Sandra Bullock's ex-husband is gross and thinks cheating is a chill, cool thing to do. And he's totally over the scandal of him cheating on her, which is why he's still talking about it seven years later.

Lola Kirke is mad at Taylor Swift

Actress Lola Kirke — star of "Mozart in the Jungle," younger sister of Domino and Jemima — is fed up.

The outspoken 26-year-old thinks that Taylor Swift's lack of political stance in 2016 basically helped elect Donald Trump. Because if you have a platform, you should dang well use it. Chatting with Vogue, she elaborated.

"For me, it's really important to elevate voices and causes. … I definitely think that there are certain celebrities who really could offer more help… and don't," Kirke continued. "Like Taylor f—g Swift, who may as well have voted for Trump, as far as I'm concerned, by not doing anything."

Oooh, Swift. Ya burnt!

The youngest Kirke definitely has a point, but to be fair, the 27-year-old pop star usually only cares about a cause if it benefits her professionally. Like feminism, for example. Feminism helps Taylor Swift sell records, but voicing support for Black Lives Matter or Planned Parenthood probably wouldn't, ya dig? Why even bother!?

So yeah, I'm firmly #TeamLola on this one.

the word

RACHAEL CLEMMONS
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Hilary Duff just figured out dating is terrible

Hilary Duff is speaking out about divorce, co-parenting and dating, and now she knows what all of us knew already: It's not always a gay old time.

The "Younger" actress admits to Redbook she's used to it now, but divorce is still a major drag. Duh! "Some of my friends tell me, 'God, it must be so nice, you get a break from your kid because you share him,'" Duff says. "I'm divorced and it sucks. Well, it did suck for a while; now it's just normal." Um, OK!

The 29-year-old, who is, for the record, not single, also laments that dating in L.A. is the worst. "I never think being single sucks until I go out in L.A. with my girlfriends and the options are terrible. I really attract the old men!" Just so you know, Duff is dating a musician named Matthew Koma right now. He's 29, which is just prehistoric, apparently.

I'm assuming he's involved in some sort of mystical Benjamin Button situation.

Mischa Barton fights release of sex tape

Mischa Barton can't catch a break. This time? Someone is shopping around a sex tape featuring the troubled star — with a starting price of $500,000. Too bad you can't actually put a price on privacy and other people respecting you enough to not secretly record you having sex.

The 31-year-old has claimed the tape is revenge porn, as it was filmed without her consent. And now, her lawyer is speaking out, too. "Ms. Barton does not consent to any disclosure of such images," Lisa Bloom wrote in a statement. "Revenge pornography is a form of sexual assault, and it is also a crime and a civil wrong in California. And we will not stand for it."

This is pretty disgusting. And frankly, Barton has been through enough. She died really tragically on "The O.C," and also, just last month she bizarrely crashed her U-Haul into her new apartment building. And there was that whole thing where she claimed she was drugged with GHB, too.

I wish she had better friends.

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John Gallagher Jr. geeks out over action movies

The "Newsroom" alum talks about going from Eugene O'Neill to the bloody "The Belko Experiment."

MATT PRIGGE
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John Gallaher Jr., left, plays an office monkey whose company traps its employees in the building and forces them to kill each other in "The Belko Experiment," in theaters Friday. ORION PICTURES

The last three movies John Gallagher Jr. has made have been genre fare. That's odd for him. Before he co-starred in last year's "10 Cloverfield Lane," he was a strictly serious actor. He was on "The Newsroom." He made indies and dramas like "Margaret" and "Short Term 12." He did Eugene O'Neill's "Long Day's Journey into Night" on Broadway. Then all of a sudden he was in the semisequel to "Cloverfield," then the horror film "Hush."

Now he's in "The Belko Experiment," a bloody thriller about an office building in Colombia whose employees are trapped inside and forced to kill each other to survive. Gallagher, 32, plays an employee who definitely doesn't want to turn to murder.

What made people want to finally cast you in more genre fare, do you think?

A lot of the directors I came across who've done horror have said that when they watched "The Newsroom," they felt I grounded some of the stakes and the dialogue in the show. They thought, "I'd love to put this guy in some extreme situations, to see how he reacts to that."

Did you change up your approach at all?

I approach everything the same way, really. I approach Eugene O'Neill the same way I approach something like "The Belko Experiment." They're very different pieces, of course, but I always ask, "What does this guy want? What is he trying to do? How do I tell the truth within this story and make it real, make it believable, interesting?" But certainly doing four hours of Eugene O'Neill on stage is a little different from going to Colombia and being covered in fake blood every day. [Laughs]

In "10 Cloverfield Lane," you spent almost the entire movie sitting and talking. It was like theater. Here, you're running around and doing stunts and trying not to get killed. Did you find that exhausting and trying on your body?

Thankfully a lot of the theater I've done has been really physical. I did two musicals that were yearlong commitments ["Spring Awakening" and "American Idiot"]. They weren't like doing an action movie, but it was a lot of learning choreography and throwing yourself into the deep end, then doing it every night.

That made me game to show up on ["Belko"] and do as much as I can legally and safely do. It ends up being fun. You feel like a kid again. When I first wanted to become an actor, it was because I was watching action movies and playing in the backyard and making up these movies in my head. Suddenly you find yourself in an office building, dodging Molotov cocktails and realizing, "Yeah, I guess this is why I got into this."

Looking back

What were your favorite action movies growing up?

I still think "Die Hard" is the perfect action movie. And I loved the "Terminators." I definitely went through an Arnold phase as a kid, where he was my hero for a while. I was the Terminator for Halloween one year.

Schwarzenegger was one of my favorite movie stars as a kid, which is weird because so many of them are R-rated. I watched "Commando" on TV, with all the gory violence edited out.

I definitely had a "Commando" VHS tape from network TV that I watched over and over again. I had an edited copy of "RoboCop" I watched religiously as well. When I got older and saw the unrated version, I was like, "My god! That's so violent!"

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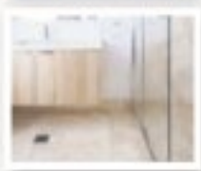

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Why maternity photo shoots are all the rage

Maternity photography shot in a milk bath strewn with flowers is a popular technique you'll see all over Instagram and Pinterest. TIFFANY BUKRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Arielle Haspel, pictured, scheduled a maternity photo shoot both to celebrate and remember her pregnancy. ROB FITCH PHOTOGRAPHY

It's about embracing the female form.

KATE MOONEY
@yatinbrooklyn
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After love (maybe marriage), but before the baby in the baby carriage, now there's another step: the maternity photo shoot.

Celebs, of course, have been at it awhile. You can trace the trend all the way back to Demi Moore's 1991 Vanity Fair cover. Beyonce set the world on fire with her ethereal, fertility goddess inspired shoot and, just last week, Ciara revealed her own baby bump in photos for Harper's Bazaar.

But now, thanks in part to these high-profile renderings, coupled with the aspirational exhibitionism of Instagram and Pinterest, everyday women are becoming bolder about embracing their pregnant form through seminude maternity photo shoots — and they aren't afraid to share the images with the world.

Tiffany Burke, a Seattle-based photographer, says that her clients have come a long way. When she first started doing maternity shoots seven years ago, "It used to be the woman and her husband would show up in matching black polos and jeans," she remembers.

Where before, "women weren't entirely sure what they wanted, they just wanted the moment captured," now they can find an entire community of inspiration on social media. "Clients can look at their friends' images and say, 'Oh, I want this,'" she explains. "Now, there's definitely more of the flower crowns and the flowing dresses."

A cursory search via hashtags like #maternityphotography, #boudoirmaternityphotos and #milkbathphotography

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reveals a sisterhood of partially clothed, pregnant and empowered women. The aesthetic varies — from provocative bedroom shots of women in black lace lingerie, to dreamy takes of women clad in tulle gowns, smooth baby bump just protruding above the surface of a milky, flower strewn bath — but the overarching theme is the same: pride in the female form and in motherhood.

Burke, who photographs in all of the above styles, says for many of her clients, the shoots help them overcome body image issues.

"When we're pregnant, oftentimes we are critical and cynical, 'Oh, I've gotten so fat here, oh my body is changing there,'" says Burke, who at the time of this interview was eight months pregnant herself. "It's a time to stop and say, 'Hold on, your body is making a human. This is a really beautiful experience and let's celebrate it.'"

That's certainly what motivated Arielle Haspel. The 33-year-old founder of Be Well with Arielle says she decided to do a maternity shoot to both celebrate and remember her pregnancy. "It wasn't easy for me to get pregnant, so when I did, I was grateful for it all. The morning sickness, my growing belly and my changing body," she says.

After a friend posted a photo of her own shoot with Manhattan-based photographer Rob Fitch, Haspel knew she wanted to have the same experience. Once she hit 37 weeks, she booked a session. "If I didn't capture the beauty of the pregnancy, I knew I would regret it," she says.

Fitch, who describes his aesthetic as "artistic silhouette maternity photography," uses studio lighting to create a classic look. This results in angelic, understated shots that highlight the femininity of the pregnant form while preserving a hint of modesty.

No matter what style you go for, practically speaking, if you want to capture your pregnant belly, you're going to have to lose a layer. As Burke puts it, "It's hard to see that in clothes."

Boudoir-style maternity photos are a popular aesthetic. TIFFANY BURKE PHOTOGRAPHY

Crystal Streets styled her shoot with gold henna. INSTAGRAM/@TATIANA_TEO_PHOTOGRAPHY

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Be sure to dress up in green to really get in the spirit. ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED

Where to celebrate St. Paddy's Day

You're in for some good "craic."

JENNIFER LOGUE
@jenniferlogue
jennifer.logue@metro.us

Break out your green sweater — St. Paddy's Day is this Friday, and Philly is going all in. The holiday honors the patron saint of Ireland, St. Patrick, as well as Irish and Irish-American culture in general. Celebrations involve wearing lots of green, covering everything in shamrocks, dancing to traditional Irish music and of course, drinking plenty of Guinness. Here's where to find all the good "craic" (Irish word for "fun") in Philly.

Fergie's Pub

It doesn't much more Irish than Fergie's Pub. Heck, its owner, Fergus "Fergie" Carey, is from Dublin! Enjoy performances from step dancers and bagpipers throughout the day and get an order of Irish stew on the menu. On Saturday, drop in for a session of traditional music from the Emerald Isle at 4 p.m.
1214 Sansom St.
Fergies.com

Bridget Foy's

All week until March 17, popular Philly pub Bridget Foy's will have food and drink specials for St. Paddy's Day. Enjoy specialties like Guinness beef stew, corned beef & cabbage, Irish soda bread with scallion butter and so much more. On Friday at 7 p.m., stop by for live music and for the sake of being festive, wear something green.
200 South St.
bridgetfoys.com

Nick's Baily Irish Cheesecake

Nick's Bar and Grille

Looking to start your drinking early on St. Patrick's Day? Nick's Bar and Grille in Olde City begins its party at 11 a.m. on Friday and will go all through the night to 2 a.m. Saturday morning. Enjoy $4 bottles of St. Pat's Miller Lite, $5 shots of John Powers Irish whiskey, Irish Coffee and more. Getting hungry? Chow down on corned beef and cabbage with parsley potatoes and a Bailey's Irish Cream cheesecake.
16 S. 2nd St.
nicksroastbeefbarandgrille.com

Howl at the Moon

This dueling piano bar in Center City is the place to be on St. Patrick's Day if you're looking for high energy fun and are a wee bit on the young side, given the crowd. Enjoy green beers, leprechaun bombs, car bombs and 86 oz. Get Lucky buckets. Just be sure to drink water in between drinks, kids.
258 S. 15th St.
Howlatthemoon.com

Tropicana Casino & Resort

In the mood to get out of town for St. Paddy's Day weekend? Head to the Tropicana in Atlantic City for some Irish-themed fun oceanside. Put on your dancing shoes to the beat of The Galway Guild at the Ria Ria Irish Pub. If you just want to chow down and drink, The Palm Restaurant will have a four-course Irish Beer dinner paired with various ales, lagers and stouts.
2831 Boardwalk, Atlantic City
Tropicana.net

Cheat on your diet with this Mocha Creme donut from Beiler's. JENNIFER LOGUE

HOT plate

The Mocha Creme at Beiler's Donuts

Here's the thing — I'm not a big doughnut person. I usually avoid sugar during the workday, and typically go for a plain croissant if I'm in the mood for a morning pastry. But after seeing everyone post the gorgeous photos of Beiler's Donuts since the opening of the new University City store, I braved the morning sugar crash for a taste of heaven.

Beiler's started over 30 years ago at Reading Terminal, and this new location at 3900 Chestnut Street is the brand's only other Philly location. The full-fledged shop has a coffee bar and plenty of seating in addition to the glass case of magical doughnuts.

The toughest part about the whole experience was choosing which one to feature, so I ended up buying a dozen for $10.99. Out of the ones I tried, my absolute favorite was the Mocha Creme.

First, it's beautiful to look at with swirls of vanilla and chocolate frosting on top of a layer of fluffy mocha cream. The doughnut itself had some weight to it because the inside was filled with creamy mocha goodness as well.

Upon first bite, I couldn't believe how fresh and soft the dough was. The frosting and buttercream was sweet but not overpowering, adding razzle dazzle to a solid doughy foundation.

If you are looking for a life-changing pastry experience, make plans to check out the new Beiler's shop in University City. Take a few moments out of your day to sit back, relax and say hello to doughnut nirvana. And before you run to one of those awful chain doughnut shops for your next office function, consider grabbing doughnuts from this sweet shop instead. Your coworkers will love you forever.

Beiler's Donuts is located at 3900 Chestnut St.

JENNIFER LOGUE

FLOWER POWER

Explore Holland through flowers at the Flower Show. M. FISCHETTI FOR VISIT PHILLY

Philadelphia Flower Show

The 2017 Philadelphia Flower Show closes out this weekend with a slew of fun events for not only flower lovers, but their kids and dogs, too. Friday night, take your pooch to Fido Friday, a "Yappy Hour" in the Convention Center's Grand Hall that features dog treats, cocktails and a walk around the exhibition with your four-legged pal. On March 19, kids are invited to bring a stuffed buddy for Teddy Bear Tea. They'll munch on petite sandwiches and pastries and sip fine teas while mingling with other young ones and their teddies.

Through March 19, Pennsylvania Convention Center, 12th and Arch streets $28-$35 theflowershow.com

Crafting Your Own Incense

Join Kathleen Callahan of Primal Apothecary on Sunday night to learn how to craft your own cone or loose-leaf incense. The workshop begins with a chat about the origins and many uses of incense before turning guests loose to whip up their own aromatic, slow-burning masterpiece out of common spices and herbs. Ingredients will be provided, but guests are asked to bring a small bowl in which they can mix all the makings.

March 19, 5-7 p.m.
Palo Santo Wellness Boutique
1707 E. Passyunk Ave.,$35
palosantowellnessboutique.com

MUSIC

PAYLEY PHOTOGRAPHY

The Zombies

Legendary rock group The Zombies made history as the second U.K. band — after the Beatles — to score a No. 1 hit in the States. That song was "She's Not There" and you can bet they'll be playing it along with more hits from their 1960s heyday this Friday night when they roll into the Keswick Theatre on their Odessey and Oracle 50th Anniversary tour. They may even treat you to some of their new tunes, too.

March 17, 8 p.m.
Keswick Theatre
291 N. Keswick Ave.
$29.50-$72
keswicktheatre.com

Puddles Pity Party

A video of him singing Lorde's "Royals" made him an internet superstar, but Puddles is still the saddest 7-foot clown around. Join his Pity Party at the Trocadero Friday night to hear the surprisingly golden-voiced crooner take on some new tunes — all sung in near vicinity to a box of Kleenex. Aww.

March 17, 9 p.m.
Trocadero Theatre
1003 Arch St.
$29.50
thetroc.com

FKJ

French electronic artist FKJ (aka French Kiwi Juice) returns to Philadelphia in support of his eponymous debut LP. The work finds the former movie sound engineer creating dreamy beats by splicing sounds from myriad genres — from funk to jazz to hip-hop. Apple music describes it as "mesmerizing ... a moment of aching soul amid all the intricate electronica."

March 19, 8:30 p.m.
Union Transfer
1026 Spring Garden St.
$17-$19
utphilly.com

LQTBQ

qFLIX

Philadelphia's only LGBTQ film festival hits screens across Center City this weekend, with nearly 30 flicks spotlighting the modern queer experience. Film subjects are wide-ranging — from a collection of men's and women's short films to China's first gay fantasy picture, "Welcome to Dead Hotel." qFLIX closes Sunday night with a screening of the musical "Something Like Summer," which has been dubbed the gay "La La Land." City of gays, are you shining just for me ... ?

Through March 19
Various locations and prices
qflixphilly.com

Interfaith Drag Brunch

A gay Jew, a gay Catholic and a gay Muslim walk into a bar ... That's a thing that's really going to happen Sunday afternoon at the Interfaith Drag Brunch, where local out faith leaders will congregate with a bunch of drag queens to talk about acceptance in organized religion. Comedian Martha Salzman-Gay, who describes herself as a Unitarian/Quaker hybrid, and drag queen Crystal Electra are among the slated performers.

March 19, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Tabu Lounge & Sports Bar
200 S. 12th St.
$15
tabuphilly.com

ART

"Object Temporarily Removed"

The Fabric Workshop and Museum debuts a selection of recent works by artist-in-residence Lenka Clayton. The Brancusi-inspired works — including sculpture, video, typewriter drawings and more — manipulate everyday reality through objects and imagery that run the gamut from absurd to poetic. Clayton is having quite the moment in the sun lately, as she also has an exhibition that just opened at the Guggenheim in NYC.

March 17-July 9
The Fabric Workshop and Museum
1214 Arch St.
$3 suggested donation
fabricworkshopandmuseum.org

THINK TANK

Civics on Tap

PThe 2017 primary election is coming up in Philadelphia on May 16, and one local group is working to make sure voters are well-informed and ready to hit up their polling places. Join Civics on Tap and Committee of Seventy on Thursday night for a thorough — and at times humorous — rundown of who and what is on this spring's ballot. There will be beer! March 16, 6:30-8 p.m.
National Mechanics
22 S. Third St.
facebook.com/CivicsOnTap

JOSH MIDDLETON

AUTHOR EVENTS

PROVIDED

Cheech Marin

Cheech Marin, one-half of legendary stoner comedy duo Cheech and Chong, comes to the Free Library to sign copies of and share tales from his long-awaited memoir, "Cheech Is Not My Real Name: ... But Don't Call Me Chong." The book delves into his five-decade-long entertainment career, and more personal life experiences like dodging the draft and acquiring an impressive collection of Chicano art. No bongs allowed.

March 16, 7:30 p.m. Free Library of Philadelphia, 1901 Vine St. $15, freelibrary.org

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Where the craic is

We round up the world's best St. Patty's Day celebrations.

Fodor's Travel

Munich sets aside its German beer allegiances for one day a year to embrace St. Patty's. Below, swag at a Dublin souvenir shop. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

New York City

The country's (and the world's) largest St. Patrick's Day celebration attracts over 2 million people for the city's grand parade on March 17. The march up Fifth Avenue starts at 11 a.m. on 44th Street and lasts about six hours, ending at 79th Street, with a stop at St. Patrick's Cathedral along the way. There are no floats or cars allowed in the parade, which features bands, bagpipes and dancers, and typically between 150,000 to 250,000 participants. The tradition itself dates back to 1762, making the NYC St. Patrick's Day Parade older than the U.S. itself.

Dublin

Of course Dublin hosts one of the biggest St. Patrick's Day celebrations: five days filled with boat races, the Irish Beer & Whiskey Festival, music and street performances, and a spectacular parade. This year the festival runs March 16-19. The parade, which takes place on St. Patrick's Day, attracts about half a million spectators to watch the procession from Parnell Square to St. Patrick's Cathedral. And as part of "greening the city," major landmarks throughout Dublin, such as the Natural History Museum and St. Patrick's Cathedral, are given a green glow.

Sydney

The Sydney Opera House turns green for St. Patrick's Day and so does the rest of the city. With a huge themed parade (dating back more than 200 years) on the Sunday before St. Patrick's Day, there's also pre- and postparade entertainment along the streets of Sydney. The parade itself is one of the largest in the world, and the only one organized and sponsored by the Irish community and their nation's government.

Chicago

The Windy City truly commits to St. Patrick's Day by dyeing the Chicago River green every season. The tradition dates back to 1961, when the chairman of the annual parade saw green dye in the river (which at the time was used to identify a sewage problem) and got the idea to use it for the upcoming holiday. On the Saturday before St. Patrick's Day, more than 400,000 people gather along the Chicago River to watch 45 pounds of environmentally safe vegetable dye turn the murky river a bright shade of green. After the morning's dyeing ceremony, even more spectators gather for the city's parade at noon.

Montreal

Since its inauguration in 1824, the Montreal St. Patrick's Day Parade has never been cancelled, regardless of poor weather in past years. The festivities take place on the Sunday before St. Patrick's Day and includes floats, bands and plenty of costumes. The three-hour parade features a massive replica of St. Patrick, which announces the beginning of the celebration.

London

On the Sunday before St. Patrick's Day, many gather for the city's annual parade, where floats and marching bands travel the 1.5-mile route from Green Park to Trafalgar Square. An all-day festival at Trafalgar Square includes music performances, a food market, fashion show and film festivals. If you get sick of the outdoor celebration, you can stop by any of the nearby Irish pubs, many of which are hosting themed events with music and prizes.

Montserrat

Another place often referred to as "the Emerald Isle," this island in the British West Indies is the only place outside of Ireland where St. Patrick's Day is considered a public holiday. To celebrate, the country has a 10-day festival, which has included a St. Patrick's Day dinner, a Kite Festival, performances by the Emerald Community Singers Irish Cabaret and more in past years. March 17 also marks the country's first slave rebellion, leading to additional African and Caribbean festivities in order to commemorate the anniversary.

Savannah

With one of the largest St. Patrick's Day celebrations in the world, Savannah's festivities draw more than 300,000 people each year. The annual parade will feature horses and a variety of floats on March 17. The city's festivities also include a celebration on River Street, with vendors and live musical performances, and the Tara Feis Irish Celebration, with crafts, storytellers and musical performances. Even before St. Patrick's Day itself hits, Savannah hosts a number of smaller parades and celebrations starting in mid-February. One special event is the William Jasper Green ceremony, which honors the Irishmen who lost their lives in the Siege of Savannah.

Munich

With one of the more recently established St. Patrick's Day traditions (the parade dates back to 1995), Munich's festivities are gaining more traction each year. With about 15,000 participants, the city shuts down Leopold Strasse in order to celebrate the Irish holiday.

Buenos Aires

Not only is Buenos Aires home to the largest St. Patrick's Day celebration in South America, but the city is home to the fifth-largest Irish community in the world. The result is a St. Patrick's Day street festival taking up 10 blocks along Reconquista Street, with music and dancing. And their annual parade, which ends at the Plaza San Martin, features Celtic musical selections and a leprechaun costume contest.

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Villanova NCAA preview: Finally, the title defense begins

Villanova has kept blinders on all season long. It's finally time to take them off.

JON MARKS
@MetroPhilly
sports@metro.us

Villanova's title defense will begin Thursday evening in Buffalo, a 7:10 tip off. GETTY IMAGES

Finally!

All season Villanova's men's basketball team has managed to dodge the question.

"We're not thinking about that," they'd say in unison almost like robots. "We're just thinking about the next game. We just want to get better."

In fact, even though they're the top seed throughout the land — a veteran team which has been through the wars and whose seniors never lost two games in row throughout their careers — they're still saying it. Still dodging that question.

Can Villanova repeat? Can Jay Wright's 31-3 Wildcats become the first team since Billy Donovan's 2007 Florida Gators and only the third since the tournament field expanded to 64 (Duke 1992 was the other) to go back-to-back.

Don't expect an answer from them, but it's finally time to find out.

"No expectations will exceed the ones we have for ourselves," said last year's hero Kris Jenkins, before the Wildcats left for Buffalo, where they'll open defense of their crown vs. Mount St. Mary's at 7:10 p.m. Thursday. "We'll be ready to take on whoever's in front of us. We know the grind it takes, the mental toughness. How detailed you have to be on every little thing. It's up to the players to go out play Villanova basketball and see where it gets us. There's no failure when you play Villanova basketball."

They start hearing that phrase "play Villanova basketball" as soon as they arrive on campus. Just because the stakes are a bit higher now than when they smashing Lafayette, 88-48, in its opener doesn't mean the approach changes.

"One thing about this program is nothing changes," said Big East Player of the Year and likely All-American Josh Hart. "It doesn't matter if it's the first game of the season, the Big East Tournament or the NCAA Tournament, no team can be taken lightly. None of these games are cakewalks. If you go in thinking it's a cakewalk this game will humble you. We just have to bring our intensity every game."

If any team seems poised to repeat this could be the one.

"You usually lose a lot of players when you're champion," head coach Jay Wright said. "When Duke repeated that whole team returned. Nowadays you either lose 'em early to the draft or they're seniors. We lost three players so we've been pretty fortunate so far. But it's still so difficult to repeat."

To make it through the East bracket alone, likely facing tournament tested teams like Wisconsin, Florida and none other than Duke, will be tough enough. That's simply to make it to Phoenix where powers like Arizona, Gonzaga, Kansas, North Carolina or someone else could await.

"There were a lot of things we did well last year preparing and some things we didn't do well," Wright said. "But the experience is invaluable. Having that [championship] hangover all year, it's a challenge and I thought our guys handled it really well. But right now it doesn't do us any good. We're just one of 68 teams."

Yet the only one with a chance to carve out a piece of history alongside UCLA, Duke, Florida and four others from at least 50 years ago. Logic says Villanova will stumble somewhere along the way, because everyone else has.

Then again, these Wildcats have been defying logic all season.

March Madness: 5 can't-miss games to watch on Day 1

Make sure to catch these five matchups, even if you're sneaking it from work.

RICH SLATE
@RichSlate
sports@metro.us

With games on all day and night on four different channels, everyone knows that the first two days of the NCAA men's basketball tournament are some of the best in the entire sports year. With the First Four completed on Tuesday and Wednesday, things start for real on Thursday afternoon as **No. 12 Princeton meets No. 5 Notre Dame** in Buffalo, New York, at 12:15 p.m. on CBS in the opener. The Tigers (23-6) went 14-0 in the Ivy League then survived overtime versus Penn and they beat Yale in the inaugural Ivy League Tournament (four teams). Overall, they have won 19 games in a row. The Irish (25-9) seem to be peaking at the right time as they advanced to the ACC Tournament championship game before losing to Duke (27-8). At least one 12 seed is always a good bet to pick up a win, so don't be shocked if Princeton at least makes Notre Dame sweat.

The No. 1 seed in the West, **Gonzaga (32-1), tips off against No. 16 South Dakota State** (18-16) in Salt Lake City, Utah, at 2 p.m. on TBS. It looked like the Bulldogs might have the albatross of an unbeaten record coming into the tournament before a late-season loss to BYU. It's tough to count on Gonzaga though, since not only was the West Coast Conference particularly weak this year outside of them and St. Mary's (28-4) but they have never reached a Final Four in program history. Could this finally be their time?

Not since Florida in 2006 and 2007 has a team won back-to-back national championships, but many think that **Villanova (31-3)**, the No. 1 overall seed in the tournament, can do it out of the East region. They begin in Buffalo (7:10 p.m., CBS) with a matchup **against No. 16 Mount St. Mary's (20-15)** who edged New Orleans (20-12), 67-66, on Tuesday in the First Four. The Wildcats boast senior shooting guard Josh Hart (18.9 points per game, 6.5 rebounds per game), sophomore point guard Jalen Brunson (14.8 points per game, 4.2 assists per game) and senior small forward Kris Jenkins (13.4 points per game) who beat North Carolina for the title last season with his buzzer-beating 3-pointer.

No. 13 Vermont (29-5), champions of America East, is an intriguing team since they come in riding the longest win streak in the country at 21 games. They'll **meet No. 4 Purdue (25-7)** who is generally regarded as the best team in the Big 10 (which was very down this year). If history is any indication, the Catamounts have a chance since they were also a 13-seed when they knocked off No. 4 Syracuse in 2005, the signature win in school history.

America fell in love with **No. 14 Florida Gulf Coast (26-7)** in 2013 when they reached the Sweet 16. Dunk City is back in the tournament for the second straight year and they get to **face No. 3 Florida State (25-8)** in Orlando (9:20 p.m., TNT). Last season they crushed Fairleigh Dickinson in the First Four before losing to No. 1 seed North Carolina. Beware the athletic and high-flying Eagles, that's why the Seminoles will be a trendy pick for a higher seed to go down in their first game.

Top seeds Gonzaga and Villanova showcase a busy first day of March Madness action Thursday. GETTY IMAGES

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OPINION

KYLE BISHOP
@RotoBaller

We're right in the thick of fantasy baseball draft season. For any remaining drafts you have in 2017, consider the following bargain alternatives to some popular targets. ADP data is pulled from NFBC (National Fantasy Baseball Championship).

Third base: Draft Jake Lamb (ADP: 148) instead of Kyle Seager (67)
Seager had a sizable advantage in batting average (.278 to .249 for Lamb) but otherwise their end of season totals were quite similar. Seager hit 30 home runs, scored 89 runs and tallied 99 RBI while stealing three bases. Lamb hit 29 bombs, scored 81 runs, knocked in 91 and swiped six bags. It's worth pointing out that at the All-Star break, Lamb was hitting .291. If he's anything close to the monster we saw in the first half, Lamb could outproduce Seager this time around despite being available 80 picks later.

Sometimes when drafting, it's better to zig when everyone else zags. GETTY IMAGES

Outfield: Draft Jackie Bradley Jr. (145) instead of George Springer (34)
Since the light went on for him in the second half of 2015, JBJ has hit .266 with 134 runs, 35 home runs, 127 RBIs and 11 steals. During that span, Bradley ranks 15th among outfielders in homers and is top 10 in runs and RBIs. Prorate those numbers to 600 plate appearances and you get .266-94-25-89-8. Springer, meanwhile, produced a .261-116-29-82-9 last season. Is a 110-pick difference justified by a handful more runs scored?

Starting pitcher: Draft Steven Matz (164) instead of Cole Hamels (83)
Hamels has a much longer track record of success than Matz, of course. But he's also 33 years old and coming off his worst season in nearly a decade. While both pitchers struck out about a batter per inning and posted ERAs in the 3.30-3.40 range, Matz had a better WHIP (1.21 to 1.31 for Hamels). Matz is younger, pitches in the easiest league and park, and can be had a full seven rounds after Hamels.

Closer: Draft Cam Bedrosian (219) instead of David Robertson (124)
Robertson's strikeout percentage has dropped from 37 percent to 28 percent over the last two seasons. He's also seen his ERA rise in each of the last three years, and just posted his worst WHIP (1.36) this decade. With the White Sox entering a full-scale rebuild, Robertson is widely expected to be traded at some point during 2017. So, while Bedrosian may not have a death grip on the ninth inning in L.A. just yet, that's not enough to justify the gap in ADP between them. The Angels' bullpen is terrible, so unless Huston Street (who's already injured again) has a comeback in him, Bedrosian's a good bet to take the reins fairly soon.

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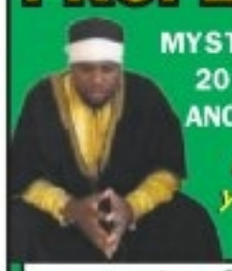

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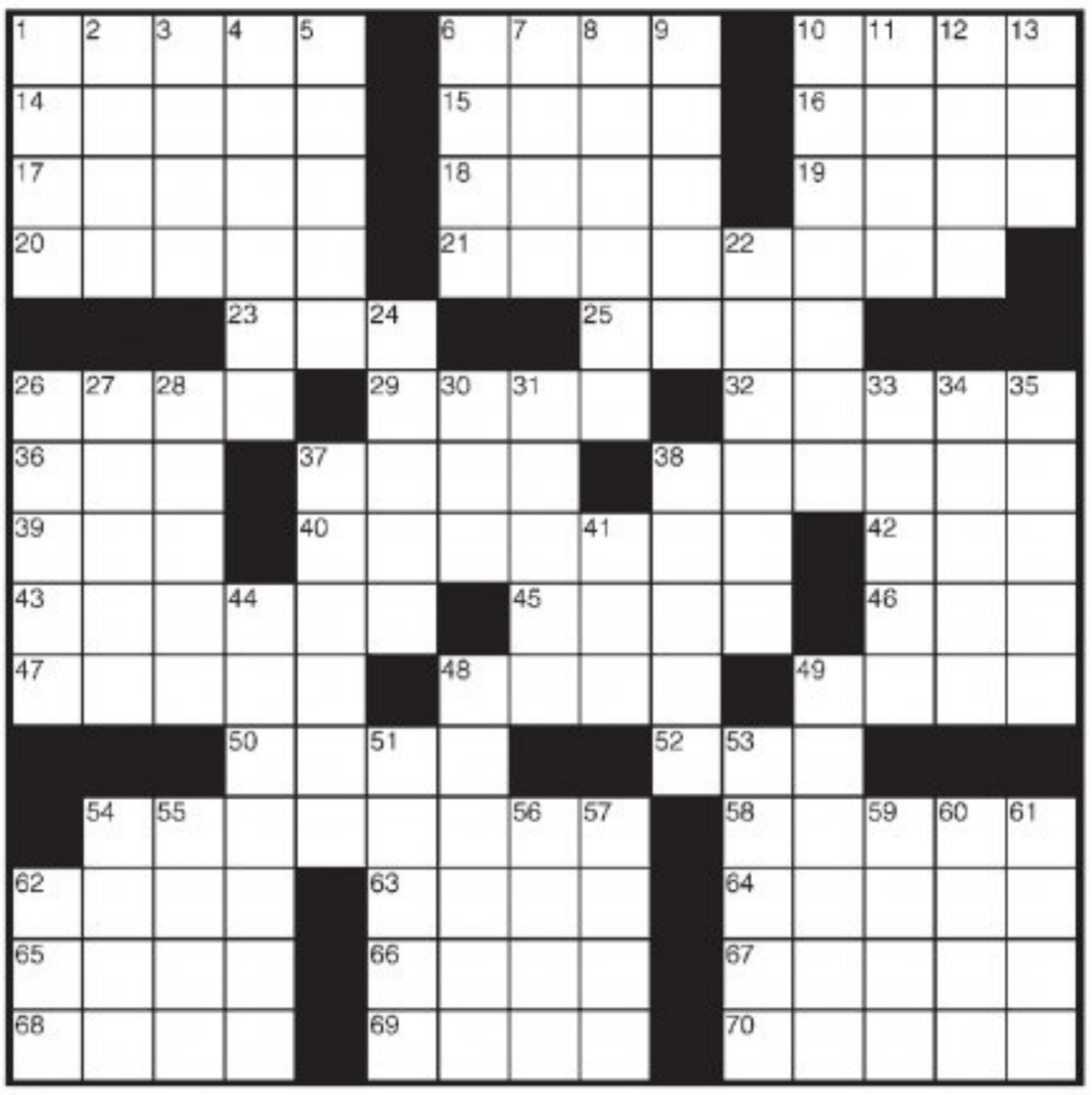

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easy

3		9	4	2				
	4			1		2		6
	1		6			4		
		8			5			
	9	5		4		6	3	
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		4			1		2	
9		6		5			1	
				9	7	3		4

hard

3					9	2		4
				6				
1	7		2				8	
	1		7			3	2	
	5	4				9	1	
	8	3			6		4	
	9				8		6	2
				9				
4		7	6					5

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Hard work will pay off if you follow through with your plans. Use your ingenuity and ability to put a unique spin on whatever you do. Trust your judgment.

Taurus Association with people different from yourself will give you a broader view of possibilities. Open-mindedness will ensure that you get the most out of an experience.

Gemini Keep a watchful eye on what others are doing. Protecting your position, reputation and assets will be necessary. Don't let anger take control.

Cancer Don't be afraid to do things differently. If you separate yourself from the crowd, you will discover a niche you feel passionate about pursuing.

Leo Be creative and work alone to bring about the changes you want to see happen. Use experience as your guide to making the right decisions.

Virgo Put effort into relationships. Making plans that will bring you and a loved one closer together or keep you on an even playing field will result in a stronger bond.

Libra Look for alternative ways to raise your income. Add more qualifications or skills to your toolkit or start a sideline service that will bring in extra cash.

Scorpio Make changes to a workspace or studio. Time spent physically working toward your goal will ease stress and end well.

Sagittarius Get the facts and move forward. Bring about changes that will make you happy. Be prepared to take advantage of opportunities. Tackle your responsibilities first.

Capricorn Pull out all the stops and stick to what you know and do best. Don't fear being different. It's your uniqueness that will help you overcome any conflict.

Aquarius Prepare to make alterations that will improve your attitude and appearance. Your gift of gab and entertaining outlook will attract attention.

Pisces Don't get angry or frustrated over trivial matters. Keep your finances in order and refuse to divulge information about your personal life. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

L	A	D	S	■	T	W	I	T	■	R	A	C	E	D
E	R	A	T	■	H	A	L	E	■	E	L	O	P	E
N	I	N	E	■	R	Y	E	S	■	V	A	D	E	R
T	A	K	E	S	O	N	■	S	O	I	R	E	E	■
■	■	■	L	I	B	E	L	■	F	E	M	■	■	■
R	A	V	E	N	S	■	O	U	T	W	E	A	R	S
A	F	I	R	E	■	R	I	S	E	■	D	R	A	M
N	F	L	■	W	H	I	T	E	N	S	■	R	I	O
G	I	L	A	■	A	C	E	S	■	C	L	O	N	K
E	X	A	M	I	N	E	R	■	B	R	O	W	S	E
■	■	■	M	O	D	■	S	C	O	U	R	■	■	■
■	D	R	O	W	S	E	■	H	Y	B	R	I	D	S
D	I	A	N	A	■	M	A	U	I	■	I	D	E	A
E	L	G	I	N	■	I	S	M	S	■	E	L	A	N
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